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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JFRAZER  
LONDON FOR CGURNEY  
NAIROBI FOR PFLAUMER  
PARIS FOR NEARY

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAGR](#) [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: NEW GOZ DIRECTIVE ON LAND ACQUISITION

1. (SBU) Summary. During a recent meeting with Commercial Farmers' Union (CFU) personnel, laboff received a copy of a GOZ directive targeted at "cleaning up" the chaotic land redistribution exercise. This policy statement is directed to the ad-hoc decisions and dealmaking which have characterized the directionless land redistribution exercise, whereby individual governors and District Administrators have entered into widely varying agreements with commercial farmers who are desperate to keep some portion of their assets. It also contains an oblique reference to allegations that some ZANU-PF beneficiaries have claimed several farms apiece. Further, it clearly contradicts GOZ claims that white commercial farmers would be allowed to keep part of their land, that no white commercial farmer had been forcibly evicted from his land, and that farms which are the only property of commercial farmers would be exempt from expropriation. In this sense, the sentiment embodied in the statement "One man, one farm" has morphed from a protective policy for white commercial farmers into a warning statement to indigenous Zimbabwean speculators. Copy of the GOZ policy statement follows. End summary.

2. (SBU) Begin text:

"Attention: -

All Provincial Governors

The Secretary of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing

The Secretary of Rural Resources and Water Development

The Secretary of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs

All Provincial Administrators

All Provincial Chief Land Officers

All District Administrators

All District Land Officers

LAND REFORM PROGRAMME POLICY PRONOUNCEMENTS

The Fast Track Land Resettlement exercise has been a mammoth task which has had many challenges. Cabinet, at its meetings of 17th September 2002 and 15th October 2002, decided that the 11 million hectares acquired compulsorily during the Fast Track Resettlement Programme and the 3.6 million acquired under the normal resettlement programme since 1980 stand as acquired and now constitute STATELAND and cannot revert back to their original status for any reason. All officers dealing with the Land Reform Programme should take note of this decision.

District and Provincial officers have given themselves excessive powers to make concessions with farmers without referring such decisions to the Minister of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement who is vested with such Land Authority powers. This must stop forthwith.

Cabinet has also resolved that:-

1. resettled farmers shall not be evicted from the 11 million hectares they have settled on;

2. white farmers affected by the above-cited position shall be accommodated elsewhere where they may be allocated portions of land which are up to the relevant maximum farm size and the allocation of the relevant maximum farm size shall NOT be deemed as a right to any white farmer;

3. there shall be no ownership of rural agricultural land by companies and that where such transfers have occurred in the recent past, such transfers shall be rescinded by Government;

4. rural agricultural farms shall not be regarded as assets

of a company but must stand on their own and shall be registered in an individual's name;

15. rural land under the A2 Model shall be leased;

16. all A2 leases shall be in the name of individuals and shall not be in the name of companies;

17. A2 leases shall contain a condition regarding Government's right to recourse in respect of the land in question or a portion thereof;

18. Government suspends until further notice the issuing of Certificates of No Present Interest in respect of all rural agricultural land;

19. the subdivision of farms shall be undertaken without any hindrance to Land Officers or influence from the white farmer who may be allocated any of the resultant subdivisions;

110. white farmers shall not be grouped into an enclave as and when they are resettled;

111. the planning, demarcation and resettlement of farms with orchards, horticultural and agro-industries shall be done with speed and requisite care;

112. the policy of one person/house hold one plot or farm still holds in the interest of equity, justice and fair play and shall be enforced;

113. future acquisitions and gazetting of rural agricultural land for resettlement shall follow the already laid down criteria and procedures which criteria and procedures shall be respected; and

114. similarly, any material policy changes in respect of the land acquisition process shall be channeled through the laid down procedures

(no signature)

1N. Masoka  
SECRETARY

SIPDIS  
MINISTRY OF LANDS, AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RESETTLEMENT"

End text.

13. (SBU) Comment. The adjective "chaotic" is frequently used to describe the resettlement program in Zimbabwe because local officials are implementing redistribution patterns of their own design. While the governors of some regions -- such as Midlands -- are attempting to craft a solution which is sustainable, other regions have seen "solutions" which resemble warlord politics, with white commercial farmers bribing the highest official they can find in a desperate attempt to salvage some of their property, or rival political leaders promoting land invasions while other resist. Ironically, such commercial farmers are still subject to dispossession, with settlers and war veterans forcing evictions whereby other arrangements, including High Court judgments in the farmers' favor, have been flagrantly ignored. CFU contacts also report that the Ministry has directed that any recent sales of commercial farms from white farmers to indigenous Zimbabwean farmers -- another attempt by white commercial farmers to salvage part of their life's work -- are null and void, with the land in question remaining vulnerable to expropriation. This latest directive appears to be an attempt on the part of the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement to re-exert some level of central control over a wildly disorganized process. Whether or not the Ministry is successful, commercial farmers do not stand to gain any relief from this initiative. As evidenced by the language in this policy pronouncement, the GOZ remains firmly committed to the destruction of white commercial farmers and their concomitant political voice.  
End comment.

SULLIVAN